forests and to plant new forests in the States of the North-Eastern region during the preceeding five years; and

(b) the levels of achievements in each case/instance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Autonomy to States in Forest Related Matters

1076. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Chief Ministers of many States have demanded that forest related matters should be given back to States from the Central purview; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to examine and decide this issue as early as possible so as to give more autonomy to States in the economic fields as well as forest related matters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) One of the recommendations made by Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations is, delegation of powers to the States to divert upto 5 hectares of reserved forest lands which are urgently required for specific public purposes. In a meeting of Inter-State Council held in November, 1997 this recommendation has been agreed to in principle subject to suitable terms and conditions as might be required under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and the decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in a court case regarding forestry matters in which, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is also one of the issues under consideration.

Rising Vehicular Pollution

1077. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention was drawn to a report of the NGO "Vatavaran" published in the Pioneer, dated 20th February, 1998, that vehicular pollution which constituted only 3% of air pollution in Delhi in 1970-71 had crossed 63% in 1990-91 and has already crossed 70% by now;

(b) if so, what are the major factors contributing to such heavy vehicular pollution on Delhi roads; and

(c) what steps have been and are proposed to be taken to check this pollution and protect Delhi citizens from ghastly diseases like cancer, asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory diseases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Yes sir.

(b) The major factors contributing to heavy vehicular pollution on Delhi roads are:

(i) Increase in population of vehicles, particularly personalized vehicles;

(ii) Most in use vehicles (pre-1990) are of old engine design and are high emitters;

(iii) High emissions of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons from 2 and 3-wheelers accounting for 2/3 of total vehicular pollution;

(iv) Overloading of transport system;

(v) Pollution from diesel trucks and DTC and privately operated buses;

(c) (i) The Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority has been set up for the